SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

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SENATE DEMOCRATS FIGHT TO PRESERVE MICHIGAN JOBS

Healthy MEDC is Crucial for State's Economic Growth

LANSING – In an effort to preserve adequate levels of funding for the state's economic growth catalyst, Senate Democrats today opposed Republican measures to gut the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). Instead of supporting amendments offered by Democrats that would allow the MEDC to continue its mission of generating business investment and expansion opportunities across Michigan, Republicans decided to cut the organization's funding by more than \$4 million.

"It is appalling that the Republicans are willing to jeopardize Michigan's future business growth and economic development just to stick it to the Governor," said Sen. Mike Prusi, Democratic Vice Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee. "The MEDC has been recognized countless times over the years for its ability to create jobs and help businesses expand in our state, today it is just a victim of Republican gamesmanship. Now is not the time to rip the engine out of our state's best vehicle for economic growth."

Sen. Mark Schauer said, "If the Republicans want to have a serious discussion on supporting the state's economic growth, we are ready to listen. But, it is obvious by their actions today, they'd rather play political games instead of taking steps to strengthen Michigan's economic climate. Tough times call for tough decisions, not funding shell games."

The Republican proposed cuts would provide only \$54,000 for the MEDC to administer its core services, representing a 99 percent decrease from its current level. During the past six years, Michigan has had more new business developments and expansions than any other state in the nation. Through the efforts of the MEDC, Michigan has welcomed more than 9,700 major new developments in the previous five years. The closest state to Michigan's six-year totals is California with more than 7,000 new developments during that time period.

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